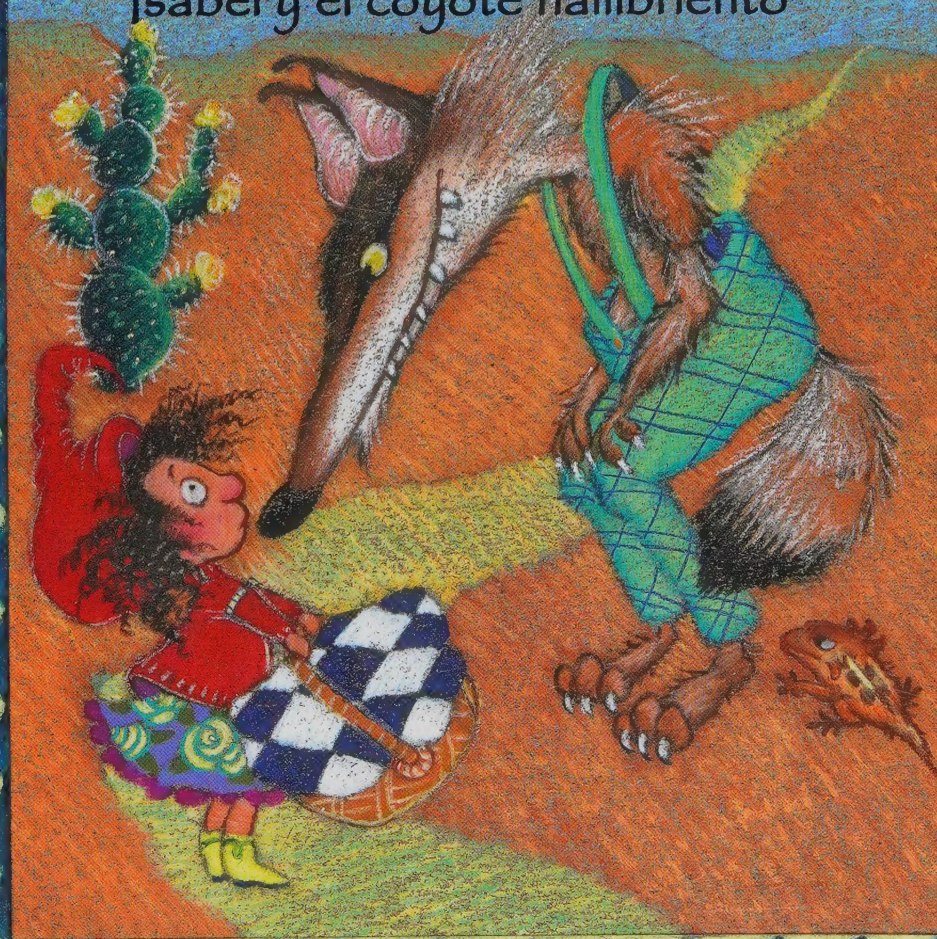


ISABEL  
AND THE  
HUNGRY COYOTE  
Isabel y el coyote hambriento



Written by / Escrito por Keith Polette  
Illustrated by / Ilustrado por Esther Szegedy



A little girl on her way to  
Grandma's house. A basket  
of goodies. A lurking  
scoundrel. Sound familiar?  
Yes, but *this* time, the  
Chihuahuan Desert of the  
American southwest is the  
setting for a spiced-up  
retelling of the classic *Little  
Red Riding Hood* story.

Fiery tamales and chili  
sauce become the villain's  
downfall when spunky  
Isabel outwits the cunning  
coyote with self-reliance,  
style and daring.

***Awards for this book include:***

**Golden Spur Award Nominee  
—Texas Reading Association**

**Legacy Book Award—Children's Finalist**

**Georgia State Reading Association  
Recommended Reading List**

***Raven Tree Press***

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Moab, Utah 84532



*To my family.*  
*—Keith*

*To Alain, who's always there.*  
*—Esther*

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Isabel y el coyote hambriento



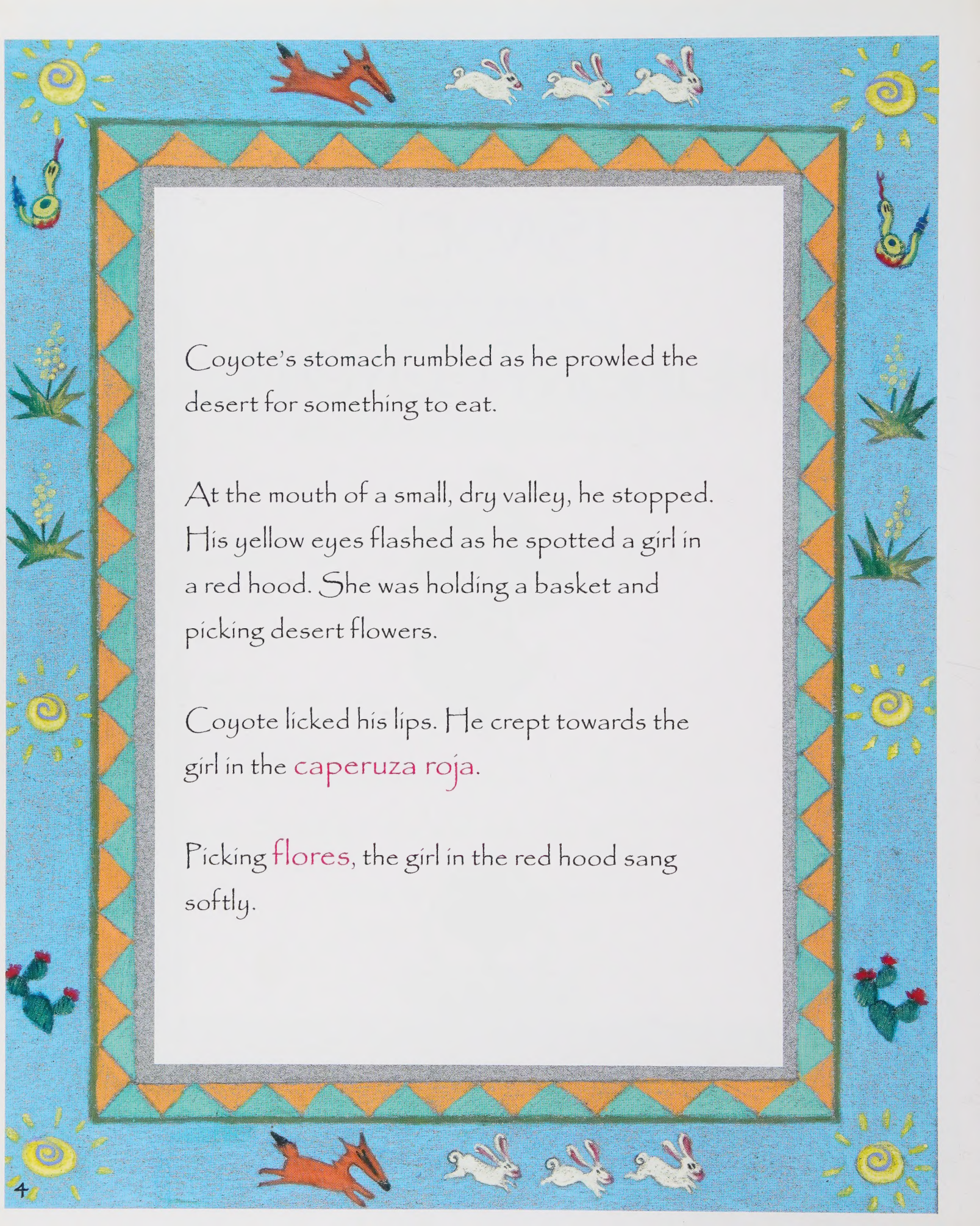
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Coyote's stomach rumbled as he prowled the desert for something to eat.

At the mouth of a small, dry valley, he stopped. His yellow eyes flashed as he spotted a girl in a red hood. She was holding a basket and picking desert flowers.

Coyote licked his lips. He crept towards the girl in the *caperuza roja*.

Picking *flores*, the girl in the red hood sang softly.

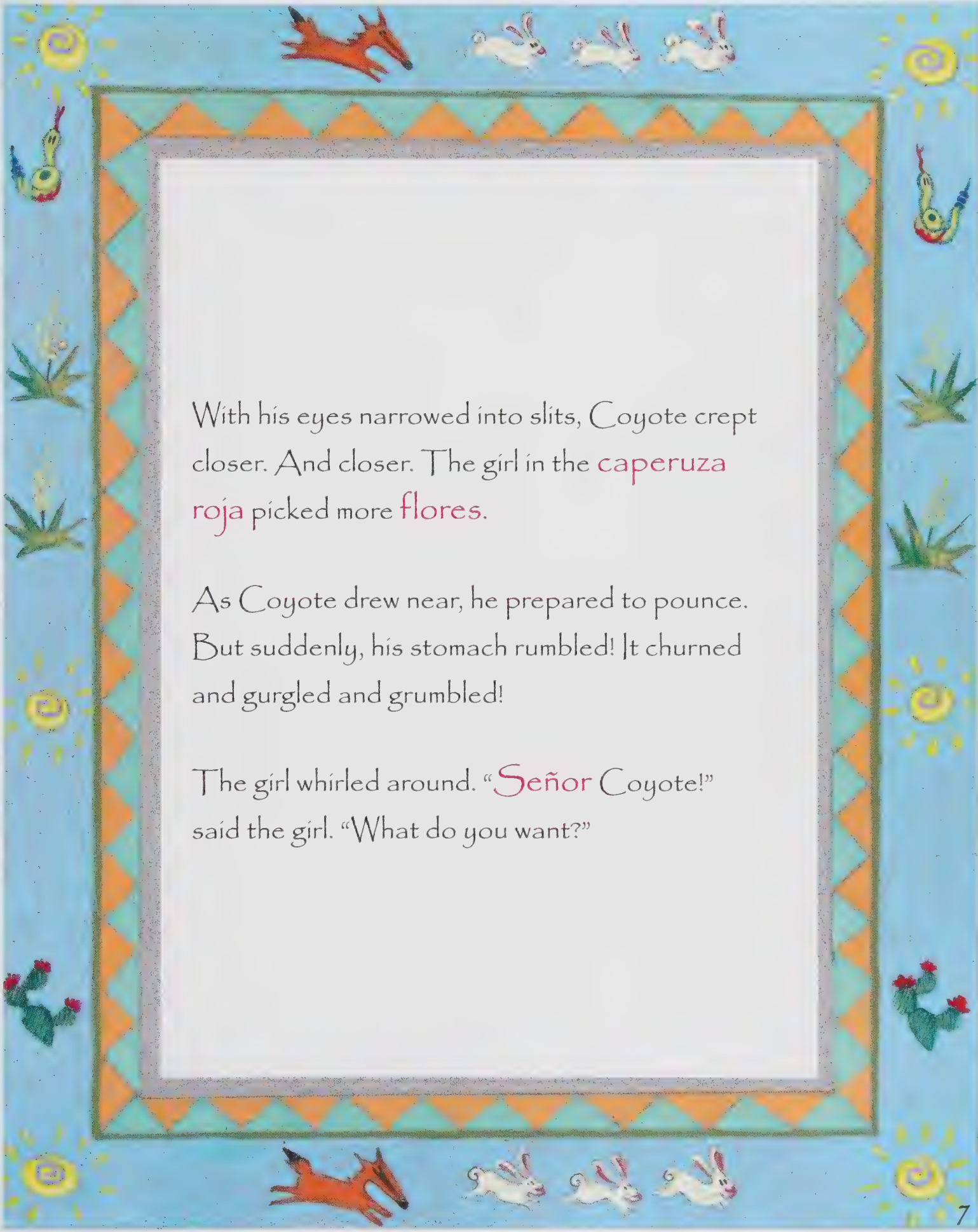













With his eyes narrowed into slits, Coyote crept closer. And closer. The girl in the caperuza roja picked more flores.

As Coyote drew near, he prepared to pounce. But suddenly, his stomach rumbled! It churned and gurgled and grumbled!

The girl whirled around. "Señor Coyote!" said the girl. "What do you want?"





"Ay," said Coyote, as his stomach rumbled.  
"I wanted to say, ah, good morning."

"Buenos días to you," said the girl as she  
took a step back. "My name is Isabel."

"My, that is a pretty red hood you are wearing  
Isabel," said Coyote.

His yellow eyes flashed. He inched closer  
to her.












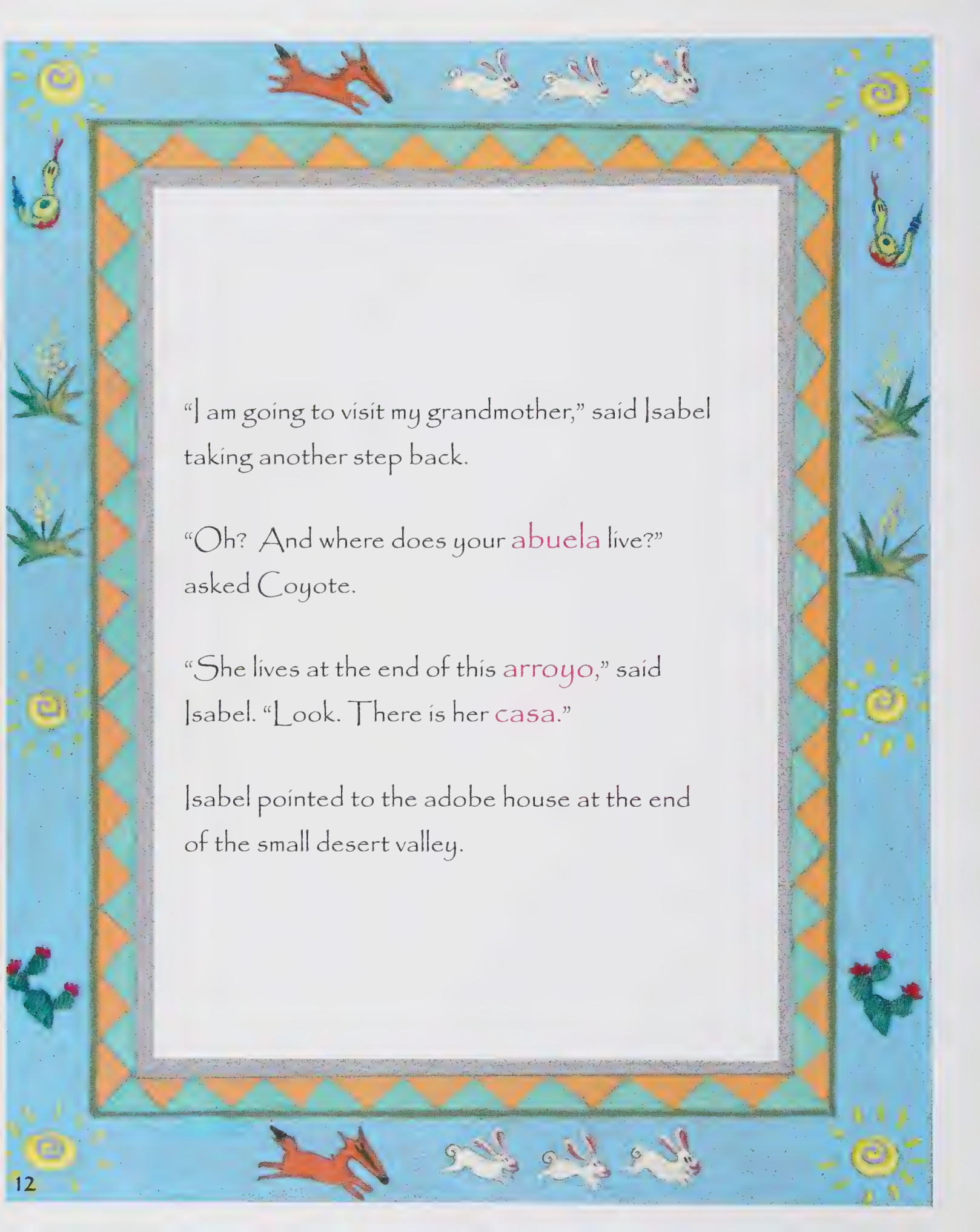


“Gracias, señor, thank you, sir. This caperuza roja keeps the sun from my face,” said Isabel as she took another step back.

“I see,” said Coyote, “and where are you going?”

Licking his lips, he inched closer.





"I am going to visit my grandmother," said Isabel taking another step back.

"Oh? And where does your **abuela** live?" asked Coyote.

"She lives at the end of this **arroyo**," said Isabel. "Look. There is her **casa**."

Isabel pointed to the adobe house at the end of the small desert valley.

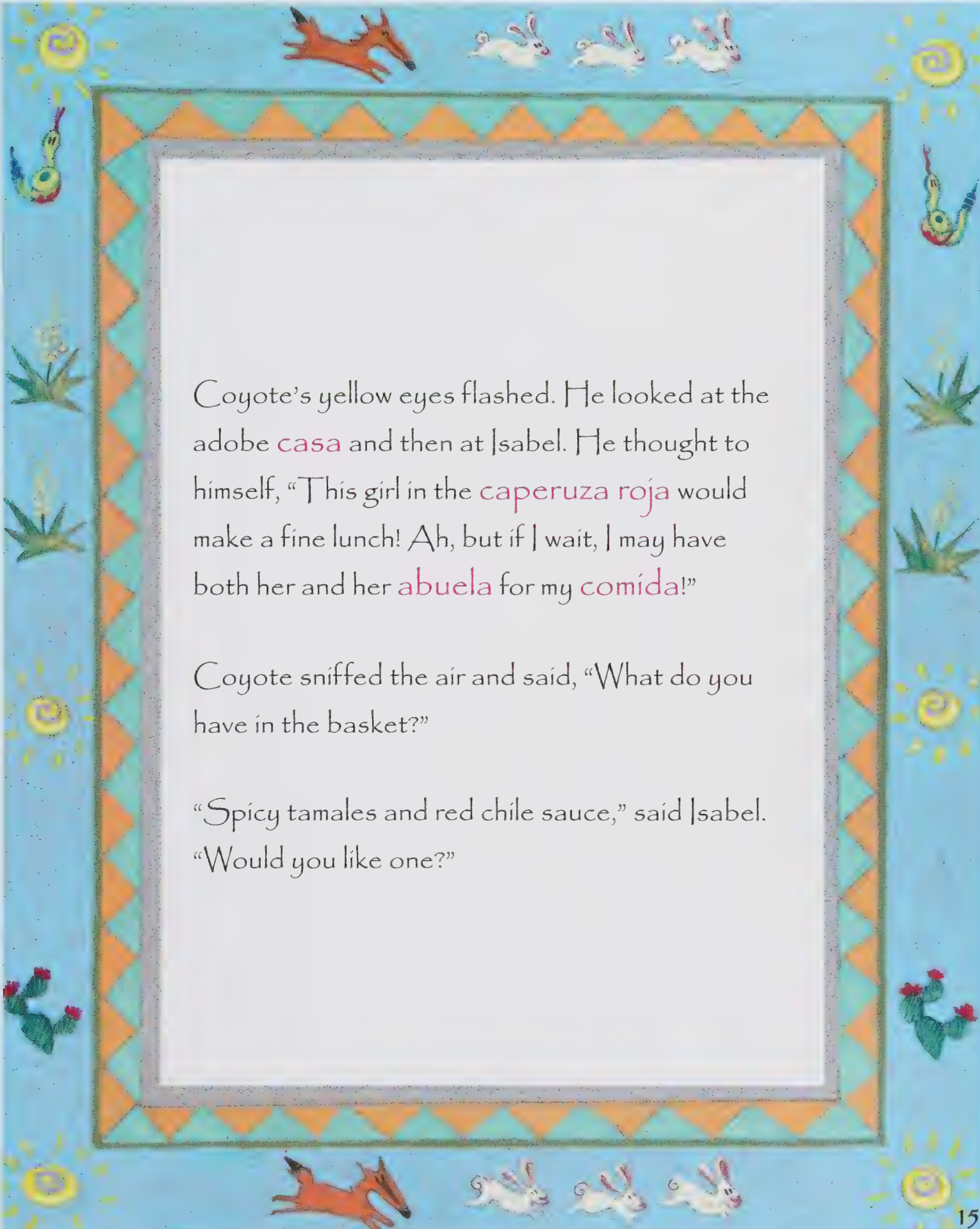













Coyote's yellow eyes flashed. He looked at the adobe **casa** and then at Isabel. He thought to himself, "This girl in the **caperuza roja** would make a fine lunch! Ah, but if I wait, I may have both her and her **abuela** for my **comida**!"

Coyote sniffed the air and said, "What do you have in the basket?"

"Spicy tamales and red chile sauce," said Isabel.  
"Would you like one?"





“Oh, no!” said Coyote. “I never eat tamales and chile sauce! They are like fire, like **fuego**. They burn my mouth!” snapped Coyote.

Coyote looked to the **casa** of Isabel’s **abuela**. He said, “I must be going. Goodbye.”

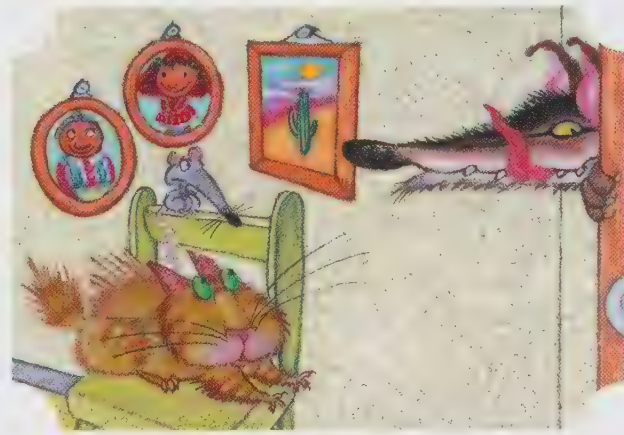
“**Adiós, señor**,” replied Isabel.

Coyote kicked up a little dust. His yellow eyes flashed as he disappeared into the **arroyo** that led to the **casa** of Isabel’s **abuela**.









When Coyote arrived at **la casa de abuela**, he found the door open. Licking his lips, he crept inside. The **casa** was silent and still.

Coyote looked into each room. But he did not see Isabel's **abuela**.

Just then, he heard Isabel lift the latch of the gate outside. Coyote scampered into the **abuela's** bedroom. He put on the **abuela's** nightgown. He jumped into the **abuela's** bed and pulled the covers up to his chin.

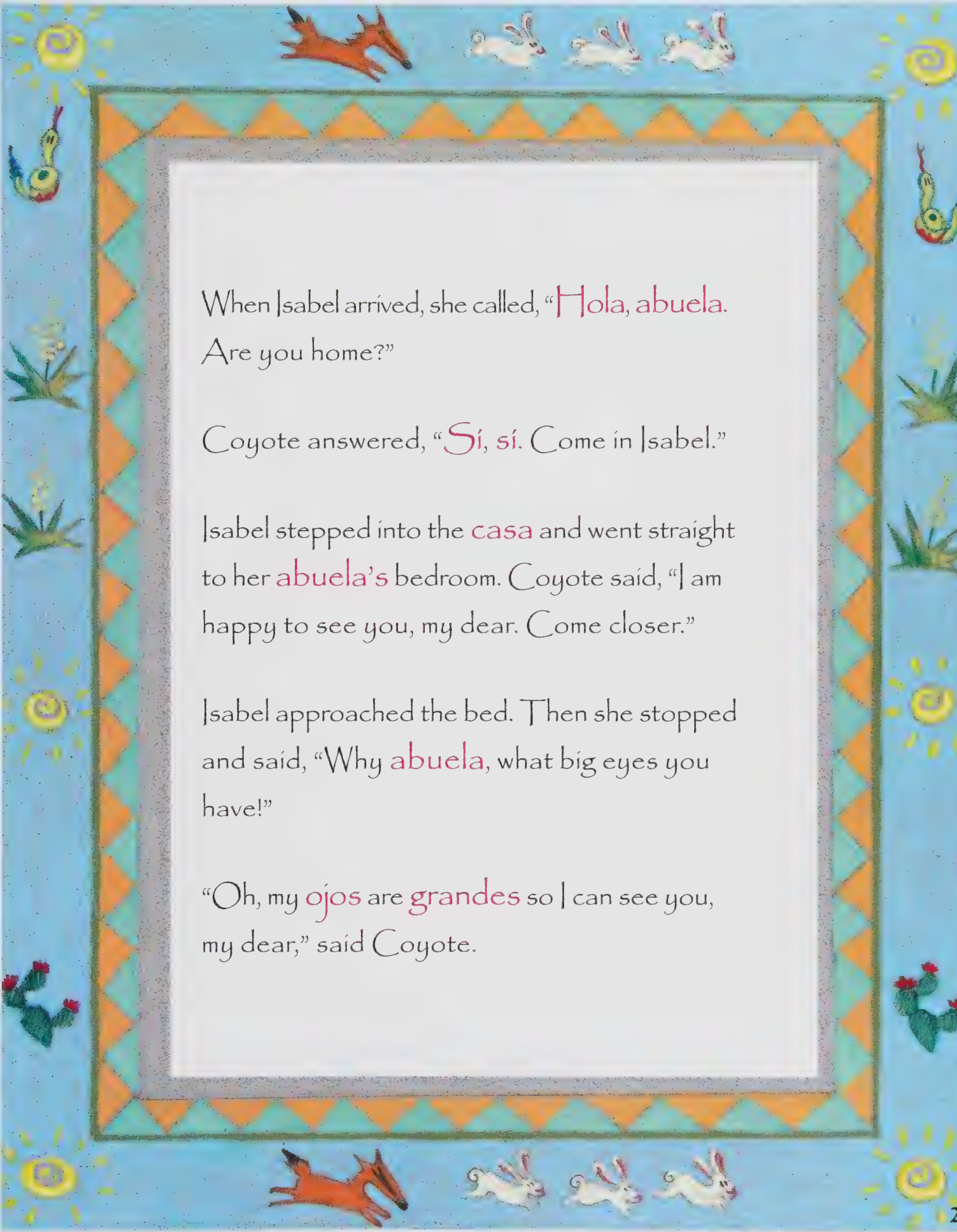












When Isabel arrived, she called, “**H**ola, **abuela**.  
Are you home?”

Coyote answered, “**S**í, **sí**. Come in Isabel.”

Isabel stepped into the **ca**sa and went straight  
to her **abu**ela’s bedroom. Coyote said, “I am  
happy to see you, my dear. Come closer.”

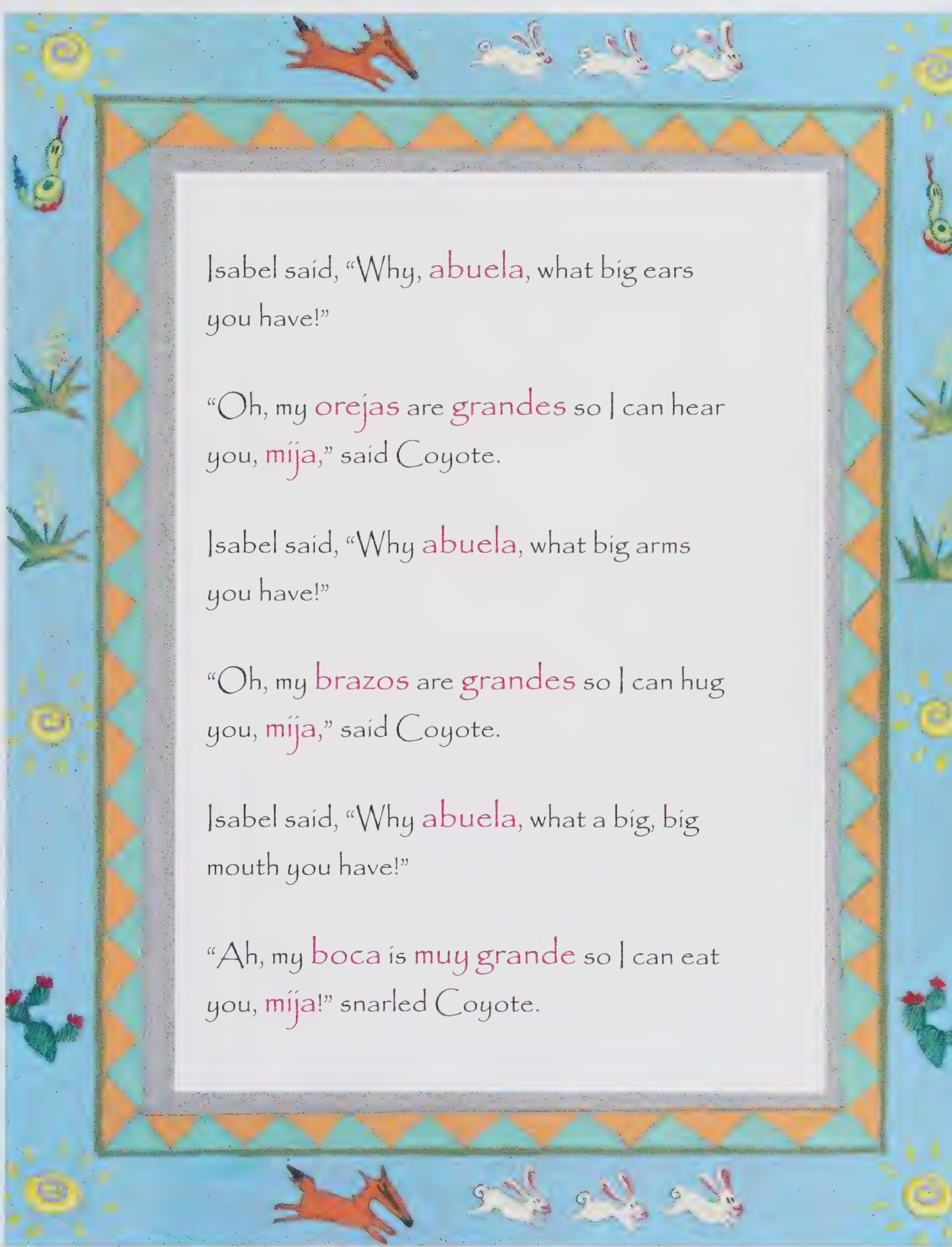
Isabel approached the bed. Then she stopped  
and said, “Why **abu**ela, what big eyes you  
have!”

“Oh, my **o**jos are **gr**andes so I can see you,  
my dear,” said Coyote.









Isabel said, "Why, **abuela**, what big ears  
you have!"

"Oh, my **orejas** are **grandes** so I can hear  
you, **mija**," said Coyote.

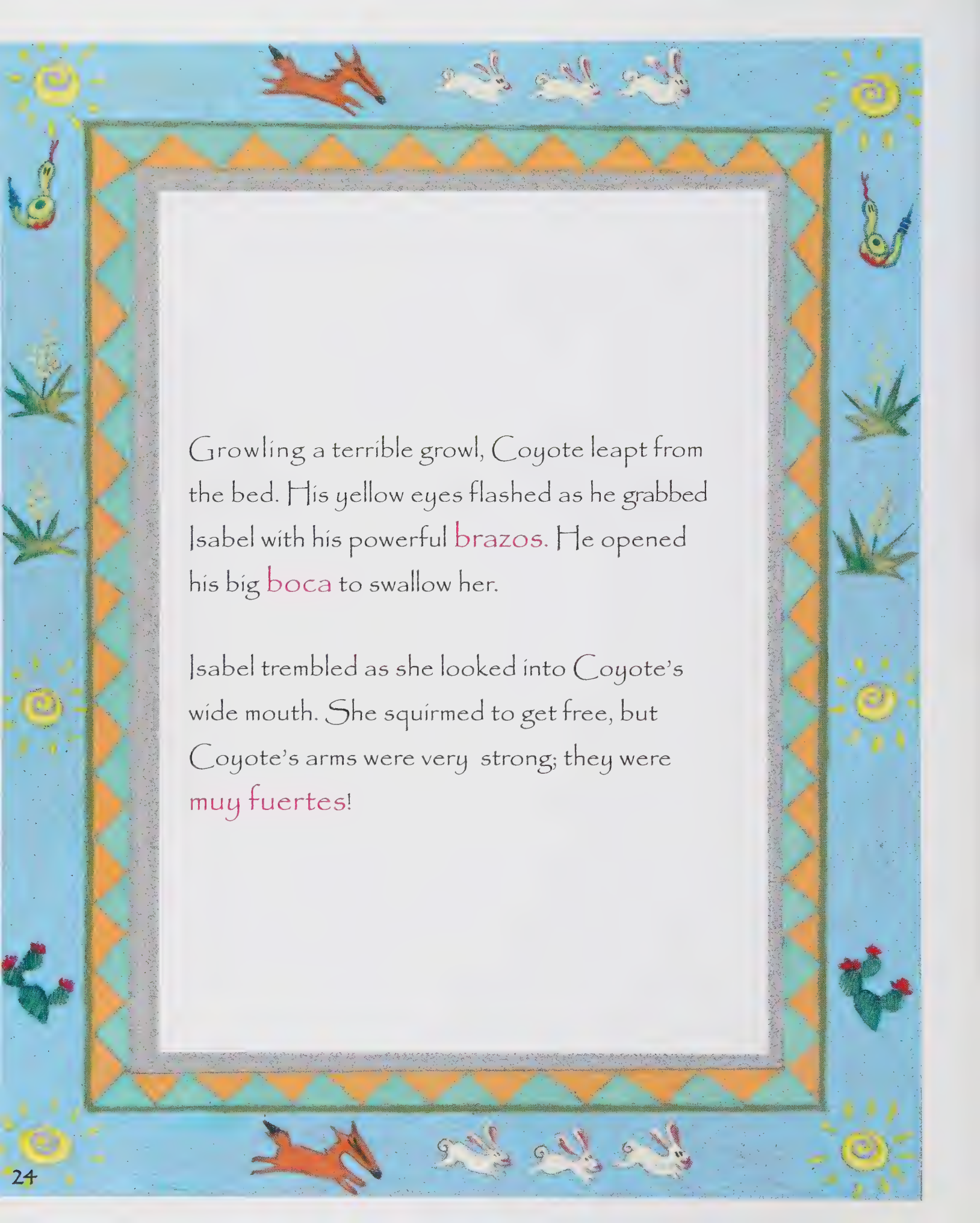
Isabel said, "Why **abuela**, what big arms  
you have!"

"Oh, my **brazos** are **grandes** so I can hug  
you, **mija**," said Coyote.

Isabel said, "Why **abuela**, what a big, big  
mouth you have!"

"Ah, my **boca** is **muy grande** so I can eat  
you, **mija**!" snarled Coyote.





Growling a terrible growl, Coyote leapt from the bed. His yellow eyes flashed as he grabbed Isabel with his powerful **brazos**. He opened his big **boca** to swallow her.

Isabel trembled as she looked into Coyote's wide mouth. She squirmed to get free, but Coyote's arms were very strong; they were **muy fuertes**!









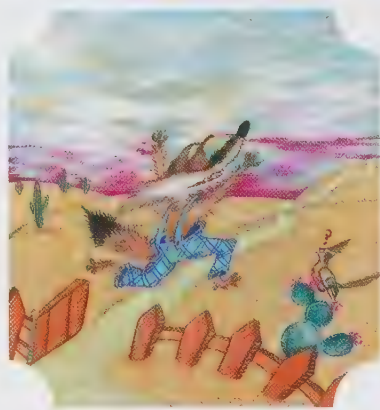


Coyote opened his **boca** even wider. Isabel looked into his cave—like mouth and had a sudden thought. She flung the basket of tamales and chile sauce into Coyote's **boca grande**.

Coyote bit down and howled, "AIIIEEE! Tamales and chile sauce! **Fuego! Fuego!** My mouth is on fire! My **boca** is burning!"







Coyote dropped Isabel and raced out of the **casa**. He scurried through the gate and scampered into the **arroyo**, howling all the while.

Isabel listened to his howls fade away.

Just then, the back door of the **casa** opened. A voice said, "**Hola**, Isabel. I am happy to see you, **mija**!"

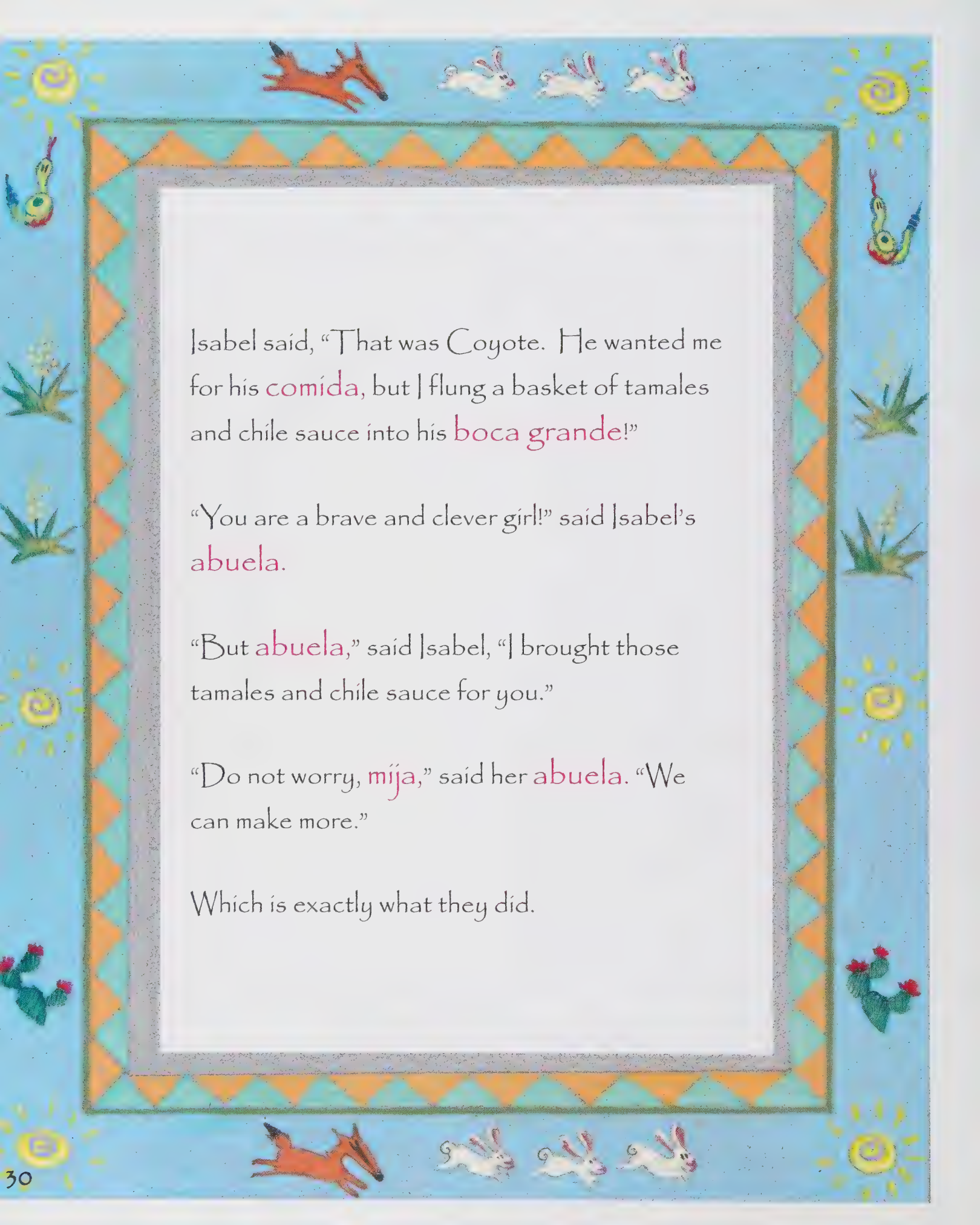
Isabel turned. She cried, "Oh, **abuela**!" and ran and hugged her grandmother.

Isabel's **abuela** said, "I was taking a **siesta** in the backyard. I awoke when I heard a terrible howl."









Isabel said, "That was Coyote. He wanted me for his **comida**, but I flung a basket of tamales and chile sauce into his **boca grande**!"

"You are a brave and clever girl!" said Isabel's **abuela**.

"But **abuela**," said Isabel, "I brought those tamales and chile sauce for you."

"Do not worry, **mija**," said her **abuela**. "We can make more."

Which is exactly what they did.







Vocabulario / Vocabulary

Spanish

English

la caperuza

hood

roja

red

las flores

flowers

el señor

sir

ay

oh

buenos días

good morning

gracias

thank you

la abuela

grandmother

el arroyo

a small desert valley

la casa

house

la comida

lunch

el fuego

fire

adiós

goodbye

hola

hello

sí

yes

los ojos

eyes

grandes

big

las orejas

ears

mija

my dear

los brazos

arms

la boca

mouth

muy grande

very big

muy fuertes

very strong

boca grande

big mouth

la siesta

nap

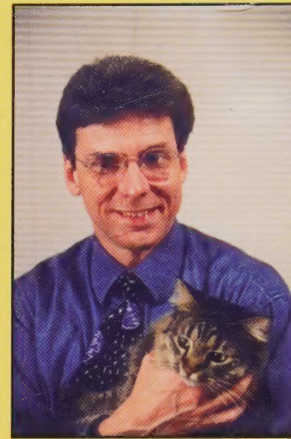












**Keith Polette**, a specialist in children's literacy, earned a Ph.D. in English from Saint Louis University, two Masters degrees from Idaho State University—one in English and one in Drama—and a BA in English from Central Methodist College. Keith is currently an Associate Professor of English and the Director

of the English Education program at the University of Texas at El Paso. His book, *The Winter Duckling*, won the International Reading Association's Children's Choice Award. In his free time, Keith enjoys martial arts, photography, hiking, canoeing, and his cat, Emily. He lives in El Paso, Texas.



**Esther Szegedy** was born in Toronto—a first generation kid of immigrant parents. She didn't speak English when she started school and began drawing in first grade to keep the kids from picking on her. She hasn't stopped since. A self-taught artist, Esther has a BA and a Masters degree in psychology,

specializing in expressive therapies (art and writing). Living in Hawaii allows her to draw outdoors at the picnic table, on lava rocks, and by the ocean. Esther is married and her household includes two cats, three geckos and an occasional rooster.

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